

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously presented) A method of playing golf, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic and a second state, resulting from immersion of the golf ball in water for a time period greater than two days and less than one hundred eighty days, in which the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is different than the first performance characteristic to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf, the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days;

striking the golf ball into an accumulation of water using a golf club; and

allowing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water for the time period of more than two days and less than one hundred eighty days so that the golf ball is caused by the water to be changed from the first state into the second state only after immersion for the time period of at least two days and less than one hundred eighty days.

2. (Previously presented) The method of playing golf according to claim 1 wherein the time period is greater than two days and less than thirty days.

3. (Previously presented) The method of playing golf according to claim 1 wherein the golf ball has a shape, size and hardness and the step of allowing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water comprises allowing the golf ball to remain immersed so that at least one of the shape, size and hardness of the golf ball is changed as the golf ball is changed from the first state into the second state to the point that a user can detect a change from the first state into the second state by striking the golf ball.

4. (Previously presented) A method of playing golf comprising the steps of:

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic;

placing the golf ball into an accumulation of water; and

causing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water and to change into a second state after a period of no less than two days and less than one hundred eighty days in which second state the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is detectably different to a golfer than the first performance characteristic by striking the golf ball with a golf club to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf,

the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days.

5. (original) The method of playing golf according to claim 4 further comprising the step of removing the golf ball from the accumulation of water after at least two days and determining that the golf ball has changed into the second state.

6. (original) The method of playing golf according to claim 5 wherein the step of determining that the golf ball has changed into the second state comprises striking the golf ball with a golf club and observing the performance characteristics of the golf ball.

7. (original) The method of playing golf according to claim 4 wherein the step of placing the golf ball into an accumulation of water comprises striking the golf ball into the accumulation of water using a golf club.

8. (previously presented) The method of playing golf according to claim 1 wherein the time period is greater than two days and less than seven days.

9.-10. (cancelled)

11. (previously presented) The method of playing golf according to claim 1 further comprising the step of detecting that the golf ball has the second performance characteristic by striking the golf ball after immersion in the accumulation of water for the timer period.

12. (previously presented) The method of playing golf according to claim 4 wherein the time period is greater than two days and less than seven days.

13. (currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method of playing golf according to claim 4, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic and a second state, resulting from immersion of the golf ball in water for a time period greater than two days and less than one hundred eighty days, in which the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is different than the first performance characteristic to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf, the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days;

striking the golf ball into an accumulation of water using a golf club; and

allowing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water for the time period of more than two days and less than one hundred eighty days so that the golf ball is caused by the water to be changed from the first state into the second state only after immersion for the time period of at least two days and less than one hundred eighty days.

wherein the golf ball in changing from the first state into the second state is caused to crack.

14. (currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method of playing golf according to claim 1, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic and a second state, resulting from immersion of the golf ball in water for a time period greater than two days and less than one hundred eighty days, in which the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is different than the first performance characteristic to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf, the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days;

striking the golf ball into an accumulation of water using a golf club; and

allowing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water for the time period of more than two days and less than one hundred eighty days so that the golf ball is caused by the water to be changed from the first state into the second state only after immersion for the time period of at least two days and less than one hundred eighty days.

wherein the golf ball in changing from the first state into the second state is caused to flake or chip.

15. (currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method of playing golf according to claim 1, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic and a second state, resulting from immersion of the golf ball in

water for a time period greater than two days and less than one hundred eighty days, in which the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is different than the first performance characteristic to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf, the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days;

striking the golf ball into an accumulation of water using a golf club; and  
allowing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water for the time period of more than two days and less than one hundred eighty days so that the golf ball is caused by the water to be changed from the first state into the second state only after immersion for the time period of at least two days and less than one hundred eighty days.

wherein the golf ball in changing from the first state into the second state is caused to at least partially dissolve.

16. (Currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method of playing golf ~~according to claim 4, comprising the steps of:~~

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic;

placing the golf ball into an accumulation of water; and

causing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water and to change into a second state after a period of no less than two days and less than one hundred eighty days in which second state the golf ball has a second performance

characteristic that is detectably different to a golfer than the first performance characteristic by striking the golf ball with a golf club to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf.

the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days.

wherein the golf ball in changing from the first state into the second state is caused to crack.

17. (Currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method of playing golf according to ~~claim 4, comprising the steps of:~~

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic;

placing the golf ball into an accumulation of water; and

causing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water and to change into a second state after a period of no less than two days and less than one hundred eighty days in which second state the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is detectably different to a golfer than the first performance characteristic by striking the golf ball with a golf club to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf.

the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days.

wherein the golf ball in changing from the first state into the second state is caused to flake or chip.

18. (Currently amended) ~~[[The]]~~ A method of playing golf according to claim 4, comprising the steps of:

obtaining a golf ball having a first state wherein the golf ball has a first performance characteristic;

placing the golf ball into an accumulation of water; and

causing the golf ball to remain immersed in the accumulation of water and to change into a second state after a period of no less than two days and less than one hundred eighty days in which second state the golf ball has a second performance characteristic that is detectably different to a golfer than the first performance characteristic by striking the golf ball with a golf club to an extent that it is impractical to use the golf ball with the second performance characteristic to play golf.

the golf ball maintaining the first state while immersed in water up to the time period that is greater than two days but less than one hundred eighty days.

wherein the golf ball in changing from the first state into the second state is caused to at least partially dissolve.